

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 L-03 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 PA-04

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7970

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

UNCLAS PARIS 7961

BRUSSELS FOR FAA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, FR, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: FRANCO-BRITISH MINISTERIAL MEETING
ON CONCORDE

1. BRIEF COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AFTER MEETING BETWEEN
ACHILLE-FOULD AND WEDGEWOOD-BENN MARCH 29 STATED
ONLY THAT THE TWO MINISTERS HAD OUTLINED RESPECTIVE
POSITIONS OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS ON CONCORDE PROGRAM
IN FRAMEWORK OF "A LARGE TOUR-D'HORIZON AND IN
VERY FRIENDLY DISCUSSION. THEY DECIDED TO MEET
AGAIN VERY SOON."

2. ACHILLE-FOULD TOLD PRESS AFTERWARDS THAT IN
MEANTIME EXPERTS FROM BOTH SIDES WOULD UNDERTAKE
A MAJOR STUDY WHICH WOULD PERMIT RESUMPTION OF
MINISTERIAL TALKS IN ANOTHER TEN DAYS. HE INDICATED
THAT FRENCH AND BRITISH APPROACHES TO PROBLEM WERE
DIFFERENT. FRENCH HAD ADVANCED FIRM PROPOSALS
FOR ADDITION OF EXTRA FUEL TANKS AND EXTENSION
OF PRODUCTION LINE THROUGH NINETEEN AIRCRAFT.
BRITISH POSITION WAS MORE RESERVED, REFLECTING
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DESIRE STUDY ALL POSSIBILITIES INCLUDING ABANDONMENT OF PROJECT.

E. ACHILLE-FOULD TOLD PRESS THAT A THIRD MINISTERIAL MEETING WOULD BE HELD IF NECESSARY, BUT HE HOPED THAT DECISION ON FUTURE OF CONCORDE WOULD BE TAKEN PRIOR TO APRIL 21 WHEN HE WAS TO DEPART FOR US VISIT AT INVITATION OF USG. HE SAID THAT IF BY THAT TIME BRITISH RESPONSE WAS NOT WHAT FRENCH HOPED FOR, THEN GOF WOULD REVIEW ITS POSITION.

R. AFP CARRIES REPORTS OF DENIALS BY BRITISH EMBASSY PARIS AND BRITISH GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN IN LONDON THAT THERE IS ANY BASIS OF TRUTH IN SUNDAY OBSERVER STORY REPORTING CONCORDE WILL BE DEAD IN THREE MONTHS.

5. REACTION OF FRENCH PRESS TO MARCH 29 MEETING IS MUTED (E.G), LE MONDE'S BRIEF STORY IS BURIED ON PAGE 6). ABSENCE OF OUTSPOKEN DEBATE IN FRENCH PRESS IS PROBABLY DUE TO FACT THAT PUBLICLY UNCHANGED POSITION OF GOF IN SUPPORT OF CONCORDE AND THUS IN SUPPORT OF EMPLOYMENT LEVEL IN AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY HAS NOT FOCUSSED PUBLIC ATTENTION ON CONCORDE'S FUTURE AND ALTERNATIVE POLICIES IN SAME BALD TERMS HERE AS IN UK.
STONE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Event:
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